



# SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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WHOLE NO., 99.

## The Principles of Nature.

### REMINISCENCES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD; OR, SPIRITUAL UNFOLDINGS.

BY MRS. S. S. SMITH.

#### CHAPTER I.

"Fifty years hence, and who will think of Henry?" Thus questioned a gloriously gifted child of genius and of song, who, at the early age of one-and-twenty, sank into the grave, the victim of consumption, with his aspirations of fame all unfulfilled. But he is not forgotten! More than fifty years have rolled away, yet there are some who still "think of Henry!" The desire of being remembered when we shall have passed away, is a sentiment familiar to every human breast. With some this desire is far more keenly felt than with others. Those possessed of a deep strength and unity of affection often exhibit a mournful yearning to be remembered, which becomes a haunting memory when they are gone. To die, and be forgotten! Ah! it must come to that at last. When these polished and once active limbs are laid away in the cold, silent grave, I, who have so yearned to be remembered by those who have loved me long and well, must share the fate of others—the beautiful dead, who, a few years since, pushed gently aside the mixed goblet of life, and were content to die. This warm July sun beams softly upon their graves. The continuous roll of carriage-wheels, the busy sounds of sentient and active life, mars not their quiet slumbers. The village churchyard is but a few rods distant. It is very silent there, mid the low, deep chambers of the dead. I know where lies the future home of this frail body; I have long been familiar with the place. It is a beautiful and sunny spot. I do not dread being left alone there. Oh! ye, who have been to me the sunlight of existence, do not quite forget! Think of me, but not in my narrow bed. Recall the loving, the old, familiar smile; the dark eye, oft suffused with tender memories. Sometimes unfold the braided tress of shining, amber hair, and as ye silently regard it, think of the redeemed spirit that can never suffer more; who rejoiced to lay down the weary burden of life, to enter upon a more glorious and exalted inheritance. Perchance you may fancy an angel standing in your midst—do not reject the thought in fear. I shall be often near you, if you do not quite forget.

Lying here upon this bed of pain, I have recalled many incidents of early childhood unfamiliar to you, which I will endeavor to transmit to paper. It may serve as a memorial when I am gone. Perchance you may be able to detect in these reminiscences some of the mainsprings of thought and action that have governed my secluded but not uneventful life.

It is profitable, sometimes, to recall the period of our early childhood; that sweet and genial season, when the heart is unaffected by care, ere sin and guilt have left their trace upon the tablets of memory, ere the heart's unwavering trust in God and in our fellow-beings has become weakened by distrust and blighted faith. The kingdom of heaven is very nigh to little children. I have seen many who seemed to partake largely of its spirit, whose guardian angels are ever nigh, both "when they wake and when they sleep," infusing into their tender and loving hearts pure and happy fancies, bright glimpses of the beautiful world far up above the stars, where the flowers fade not, from whence bright angelic faces peer down upon them from the white and fleecy cloudlets that soar aloft mid the deep blue ether.

I have often watched little children when at play, and wondered if their young hearts were ever pervaded with the deep sense of mystery which lay like a cloud upon my spirit. Yet with this sense of mystery there was no fear. Silently and eagerly I questioned all things around me, striving to comprehend the enigma of life. These restless longings to penetrate the mysteries of existence were often interpenetrated with vague, shadowy glimpses of other and far distant scenes, haunting and indistinct, floating, dreamlike, mid the hazy atmosphere of the brain, like some half-remembered fragment of a forgotten melody. These vague and haunting memories were regarded by Plato and others as proof of a preexistence. Are they not, rather, disjointed fragments, derived by impression from the memory of our attendant guardian spirit? One scene in particular has been oftentimes vividly impressed upon my memory. It is a large and antique baronial dwelling, situated amid scenes of quiet and slumberous beauty, whose stately halls and massive furniture seem as familiar to my view as the room in which I sit, yet where my footsteps have never trod. A moist humidity pervades the air; there is a greenness and a beauty surrounding the many graved walks around that old domain, which my eye hath never seen. Perchance it is the house of one of my ancestors, who came from over the sea, the titled heir of wealth and an illustrious name, who, on becoming a Protestant, fled from the persecution of the Catholic priesthood, of which he was a member, to enjoy in the New World liberty of conscience and the right to perpetuate his name.

The idea of being attended by invisible guardian spirits has been familiar to me since my earliest recollection.

Like the footfall of thought in the halls of the soul,  
Like the evening of twilight upon me it stole,  
Like the music of wings it filled all the air,  
And I knew in my soul that a Spirit was there.

Often have I lain for hours, hidden in the tall grass, with my face upturned to the sky, dreaming sweet and beautiful dreams of heaven, and of the Sinless One who inhabiteth eternity, and the holy angels who, I fancied, looked down upon me from the sky. I never communicated these vague and happy fancies to any one. I seemed to have two separate existences. These belonged to my soul-life, and were hidden away, to be resumed when the soul, or spiritual part of my being, assumed the ascendancy, and marshaled around her the satellites of thought from the realms of mind. I was ever an ardent but silent worshiper of beauty. I remember the moment when the perception of forms and their coloring first dawned upon my mind. One day, when about three years old, I was amusing myself with some toys at my mother's feet, when I paused all at once amid my play, being struck with the beauty and nobility of her countenance. From that moment the angels of my dreams assumed a tangible and life-like reality. However they might vary in some respects, they all had my mother's beautiful dark eyes, pure, high, and noble brow, surmounted with shining bands of raven hair.

Her complexion, which was clear and very fair, was of that peculiar tint which is usually colorless; but in her case there was a beautiful suffusion of rose on either cheek, which resembled the first blush of the early dawn. The principal charm of her features, which were somewhat irregular in contour, but noble in proportion, lay in her eye, which mirrored every passing emotion of her soul. At one moment the brilliancy of scintillation reminded you of the flashing of fireflies in a dark summer night. Anon their expression was so gentle, so tender, that one found it difficult to withstand their pleading gaze. What one noticed as peculiar was the profound and mournful depth which ever seemed to underlie their sunny tone,

Which made the gazer long to weep,  
When full upon him, clear and deep,  
Their mournful luster shone.

My first lessons of my duty to God and my fellow-beings were derived from my excellent and pious mother. I am not now writing her memoir, yet I have often wished that a record of her pure and blameless life, her beautiful and unostentatious character, might be given to the world for the instruction and benefit of others.

Hitherto my dream of happiness was so unbroken, that but few events were registered upon the tablets of memory. When about four years old, a cloud so dense and mournful obscured by degrees the horizon of my young life, which required many a genial and sunny influence in after years to efface its shadow from my heart.

It is singular how the mind sometimes retains the impression of the most trivial things when connected with the memory of some striking event. I remember as clearly as though it was before me now, the disposal of the furniture about the room, where sat my mother, with my infant sister upon her knee, when the sad tidings were communicated that she was a widow, and her children fatherless. I shall never forget my extreme fright on being awakened that night by the burning tears which fell upon my cheek, amid the smothered sobs and half-frantic exclamations of my poor mother, as she prayed God to protect her fatherless children.

Aside from the promptings of filial tenderness, it has been to me a source of deep regret, that I have no distinct personal recollection of my father. When we are told that we greatly resemble another, it is but natural to wish to be able to judge for ourselves in this respect.

A year or two previous to his demise he had lost the greater part of his property by some informality in the deed of possession. He had died far distant from home, of hereditary disease. The hectic dreams of the poor invalid were haunted by vain longings to die at home, surrounded by his wife and children, and to lie buried beside the loved ones in the "old kirk-yard" of his native village. It is sad to contemplate a godlike intellect, a glorious form, an expansive and noble nature, who, from the craving thirst for knowledge (the inheritance of every elevated and noble mind), passed whole nights in study, when the languid frame required repose, and the mind a respite from labor. These sad memorials of my lost parent became inwoven with my earliest thoughts, tinged with their sadness the fresh and joyous impulses of early youth, and when in the first year of my orphanage, being separated from my mother, the memory of my father (so to speak) became to me a living presence. Often when I had wept myself to sleep from the recollection of some unkindness on the part of my relatives, I dreamed of my lost parent; his penetrating look of gentle sadness seemed to divine my every thought—his pitying gesture and tender caress consoled and alleviated my grief. Picture to yourself, dear reader, an obedient, loving, sensitive child, who would not have committed

a wrong action for the world, yet in spite of all her efforts to do right, never elicited even an approving smile; whose very blunders (the result of over-eagerness to please) were always imputed to willfulness or stupidity, never uttering one word of reproach, yet pining wearily, day by day, for affection and sympathy, till there seemed less of misery in the wide world than in her single heart.

Strange as it may seem, those friends who had the charge of me, who were naturally kind-hearted people, had not the least idea of my peculiar temperament and disposition. They simply regarded me as an incumbrance upon their time and patience. They paused not to reflect that they were accountable for the effect of the aridity and isolation deepening incessantly in the heart of the child, who supposed that the want of affection on their part was owing entirely to the want of attractiveness in herself. Yet she was not uncared for. Her guardian angel was ever nigh to prevent the intrusion of jealous or revengeful thoughts. Being left much to myself, the reflective tendency of my mind developed a precocity of intellect beyond my years; and being acutely sensitive, I often suffered more from a single look that implied blame than many children do from severe punishment. I had never, nor have I to this day, the power of defending myself when unjustly accused of fault—a sudden rush of blood to the brain, a choking sensation in my throat, deprived me of the power of utterance. As the hidden rill gathers each wandering rivulet in its silent course, so my heart silently accumulated the memory of wrong, until it could no longer contain its pent-up grief, and I gave way to violent and passionate outburst of emotion. These violent fits of weeping occurred but seldom, and only when I fancied myself unseen by every human eye; yet they doubtless had a tendency to foster the germ of that insidious disease which has many times brought me to the borders of the grave.

The subsequent reaction consequent upon these modes of grief could not be concealed. My relatives, on learning their origin, and of my habit on these occasions of apostrophizing the Spirit of my father, pleading that he would take me to his home in the sky, became evidently impressed with the feeling that the "Spirit of the dead was nigh," and from that time they seemed to regard me as an uncannie child, whom it was fearful to grieve, and I was soon after transferred to a new and happier home. This little episode in my history reminds me of an incident communicated to me several years ago, by a lady of undoubted veracity, and nearly connected to the writer by marriage. She was one of those amiable but unfortunate beings whom a "merciless disaster followed fast, and followed faster," the greater part of her life. On the demise of her mother, which occurred when she was but six months old, her father placed her out to nurse. Having a large family of small children, he soon after contracted a second marriage, and leaving the little nursling without support, removed to a distant part of the country. The foster-parents, who were covetous and wicked people, visited the injury done by the father upon the child by the most savage and cruel treatment. The neighborhood in which they lived, and which was sparsely settled, was subject to frequent incursions from the denizens of the forest, and the child, poorly clad, never having had a pair of shoes in her life, was compelled to go out in the depth of winter each night to pen the sheep in the fold, and to count them again at bed-time. In this manner her extremities were often badly frozen by the cold. One night, when her foster-parents had left her to visit some neighbors several miles distant, being alarmed by the howling of the wolves, she dared not go out as usual to pen the flock. For this neglect of duty the poor child was dragged from her bed at midnight and driven out nearly naked to number the flock. The night was intensely cold. While standing on the fence to protect her feet from the snow (with the lantern in her hand), she heard herself distinctly called thrice by her Christian name in gentle tones, the voice (she said) sounded quite near. She responded to the call, and on entering the house was told that no one had called her, and ordered to bed, not being permitted to approach the fire. Nearly frozen, she ascended the ladder to her wretched bed in the loft, while her brutal protectors enjoyed the warmth of a blazing fire. In a few moments her limbs, being penetrated with frost, pained her so badly as to cause her to attempt to stifle the moans she could not suppress by holding the bed-clothes tightly over her mouth. "All at once (says Mrs. M.) the room became nearly as light as day. Standing by my bedside was a lady whom I did not remember ever having seen before. I knew it was my mother! I was not afraid. Being desirous of knowing how she had looked in life, I noted attentively her countenance, the color of her hair, her dress, and the clean checked apron, ironed neatly in folds, the muslin kerchief pinned smoothly on her chest." So minute were her observations, that she even noticed the manner in which the ribbon was pinned on her cap and tied in a bow underneath the chin. The next morning Mrs. M. related to her foster-mother the appearance of the specter, who recognized the description at once, and impelled by a sense of awe, owned to the child her belief that it was her own mother, whom she had never seen but once in life, and then she was dressed

in precisely the same manner as described by the child. This visitation seemed to answer the intended purpose, viz., that of ameliorating the condition of the poor child, who was soon after provided with a pair of shoes, and no longer sent out naked in the cold to pen the fold at night.

Whoever may peruse these pages, let them see to it that they darken not the light of happiness in the heart of a child, "For their angels do always behold the face of our Father who is in heaven." It is a fearful thing to lay upon the young breast the burden of over much sorrow, when the simple fact of existence should be, at this tender age, the outbreathings of a hymn of divinest harmony.

#### CHAPTER II.

Many people ridicule the supposed absurdity of regarding dreams as foreshadowing coming events. I am free to admit that I believe myself to have been thus forewarned of many serious trials in life, which, to an organism delicately attuned to the utmost extension of joy or sorrow, is a mercy of no small magnitude. I do not often dream, but when I do, there is a coherency and propriety, a vivid and life-like distinctness in my dreams, which serves to impress them upon my memory. A dream of this kind, which occurred anterior to the demise of my father, was regarded by my mother as of prophetic import, and long treasured in her memory. The dream occurred as follows: It was a morning in summer. An inevitable necessity, which I could not divine, had suddenly caused a separation in our family. We parted in mute sorrow, each wending our separate ways. Soon I found myself wandering alone along the bank of a quiet and limpid stream. I felt very solitary and pined to return to my old home, which was still in sight, but dared not, knowing it to be unoccupied. A beautiful and sunny radiance seemed to suffice the green mossy bank of the opposite side of the stream (which was neither wide nor deep), and a glorious vista opened beyond. I many times essayed to cross this stream, lured by the beauty of the scene beyond, but desisted from the fear of lacerating my bare feet on the sharp and flinty stones embedded beneath its limpid waves. The time thus occupied seemed to be very long as though it involved a period of months and years. All at once I saw my mother and sisters, with my little brother, coming toward me. At the same moment I observed that the golden glow which lay on the other side of the stream also irradiated the side on which we stood. A strait and narrow road or pathway, which ran parallel with the stream, appeared also illuminated on either side with the same rosy light, and casting my eye along the entire length of the valley, I saw that it wound upward over the summit of a lofty hill, whereon rested a glory indescribable. My mother's countenance exhibited a serene and joyous expression, the same pearly light beamed on her lovely brow. All at once she exclaimed in joyous accents: "They are coming! we are this day to join them in their pilgrimage to the eternal city." Meantime, while she watched their approach, we all knelt upon the green bank and bathed our faces, hands, and arms in the limpid water, and dried them on a pure, white napkin, which our mother held in her hand. I shall never forget the appearance of that bright and glorious company, clothed in long and flowing robes of white, walking two abreast, with measured footsteps along that narrow road. Foremost in the stately procession was one whose form towered high above the rest. His majestic features wore an ineffable sweetness, yet were withal so radiant as to dazzle the sight. They paused opposite to where we stood, and turning his beaming face toward us, said, "Are you ready?" My mother answered, "I am ready." "And the children, are they ready?" "They are ready," was her response. "Come, then, and join my company," was the welcome rejoinder. Amid a flourish of glad music, emanating from harps of gold, which seemed to rend the air with loud acclaim, we found ourselves amid this train, and the stately procession moved onward toward the delectable mountain. The most singular part of this dream is yet to be told. On looking down at my feet I observed, tripping close by my side, a milk-white dove of rare and exceeding beauty. At the same time, it lifted its glancing eye to mine, with a look which thrilled my very soul, when a voice at my side said, "This is the Holy Spirit; it will never leave you, and will accompany you in your journey to the eternal city." And here the beautiful vision faded from view, but not from my memory—it seemed stereotyped upon my brain. The next morning, on relating the dream to my mother, I asked her the meaning of the phrase, "Holy Spirit," which I heard for the first time in my dream. This dream or vision, the reader will observe, foreshadowed not only our subsequent separation and reunion, but also that interesting scene which followed the uniting of the severed links of the household band, when myself and three sisters, standing upon the bank of a shining river, gave ourselves to the Saviour, by the washing of baptism unto regeneration. Many years since, when I visited my childhood home, I found, to my surprise, that the picture daguerreotype upon the mind of the child was singularly correct. Strangers inhabited the ancestral dwelling. The wall-flower and ivy

no longer cast their shade over the little portico where my uncle used to sit of an evening. The soft and mellow tones of his flute no longer echoed along the valley. That chivalrous and kindly spirit had passed away in his early prime. The convivial habits of the age and neighborhood in which he lived had introduced him to an acquaintance with that subtle element "which giveth its color in the cup." There was no "Father Mathew" to extend to him the "redeeming pledge." He awoke in time to save the residue of the paternal acres and ere his fine moral sense had become sensibly impaired by its paralyzing influence, consumption had set its seal upon his stalwart and noble form. "Bury me not," said he, "beside my revered parents; I am not worthy to slumber by their side." They made his grave, according to his request, on the summit of a beautiful cone-shaped hill, and people wondered and mused that one so indulgent and charitable to others should be so unforgiving to himself. The solemn moonlight illuminated the sod as I knelt to implore a *requiescat* over his grave. Wishing to appease the aggrieved Spirit, I had made an early visit to the spot. As I paused to rest for a moment, I could not avoid thinking how very many of our best acts are frequently influenced by feelings we are ashamed to confess to the world! Even the wisest and best minds are not exempt from superstitious feelings, which they take unwearied pains to conceal; and thus we go on deluding ourselves and others to the end of life. In the course of one year another grave had been made by his side. It was for his gentle and pure-hearted young wife. The earth seemed dark to her after he had left it. The grief for his only fault, as she termed it, was consoled by the firmness with which (for many months preceding his death) he rejected the tempting cup.

The morning sunlight glittered upon the dew-drops which still lingered along the terrace walk, as I approached the house. There I had many times prayed and wept when the stars looked down at eve. Turning, I beheld the same purple shadows resting upon the grass and grain along the hillside, which brought such a sense of home-sickness to my heart in the long, long past. With painful distinctness, I recalled all those mournful memories which my young heart garnered there. We forget nothing; memory only slumbers for a time. After the sleep of death, when the reveille shall awake us from our momentary slumber, the soul will gather up the faded memories of the past, and bear them onward forever. My new home lay about a mile distant from the beautiful village of \*\*\*. My aunt (a younger sister of my mother), having no children of her own, was naturally indifferent to their society. She only required of me to be truthful and obedient, and having no disposition to act otherwise, I was left very much to the freedom of my own will. Though she ever treated me with a gentle kindness, she was not communicative. She was at that time too deeply engrossed by her own private sorrows, to cultivate the acquaintance of a bashful and silent child. She was a superior woman, devoutly and rather austere pious. Her radiant and noble features were nearly always veiled by the reflection of a grave and thoughtful sadness, which so impressed itself upon my susceptible nature, that while I loved her with an affection bordering on idolatry, I seldom had the courage to address her even a commonplace and necessary question. She was retiring and secluded in her habits, seeming ever absorbed by the intensity of her own unuttered thoughts, and by a constant endeavor to attain to still more elevated heights of piety and devotion. Child as I was, I detected and enjoyed, with a son of generous pride, her marked superiority of manners and of conversation to any ladies with whom she exchanged the usual courtesies of life. Could she have known (alas! she never did know in life) how deeply and tenderly I loved her, she would doubtless have been more strongly attracted to myself. Yet she was ever patient, and attended to all my wants with scrupulous fidelity. The green sod has long rested on her grave. The shadow has passed from heart and brow at last. The secret heart-sorrow has been long lifted from that faithful breast. The meek and adoring spirit has found a neophy whole for all grief in a blessed fruition by the peaceful waters of the river of life forevermore. Since my earliest recollection it has been as natural for me to list my thoughts to God with every passing emotion of joy or sorrow that crossed my breast, as for the plant to spring up to meet the sun and air. Excepting a brief period (when I had been beguiled into the utterance of an untruth), I had never known fear. The deep joy and gratitude which thrilled my heart for the blessing of a happy home, where I no longer felt myself an incubant, as I knelt in the shadow of that large, lone, unfinished, and unfurnished chamber, beside my little bed, to offer up my nightly prayer, can not well be expressed; and as I walked, or rather skipped, along the green path which led to the little clump of trees on the hillside, called the nursery, the boudoir of my daily walk, in the exuberance of returning joy, the earth and all things around me, no less than my own happy heart, seemed to mirror the smile of God's boundless and all-pervading love. Being possessed of a keenly observant and inquiring turn of mind, and having no knowledge of books (I did not even know all the letters of the alphabet), although I

## SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

S. B. BRITTAN, EDITOR.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 1864.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"**God—THE PROBLEM.**"—The author labors to assure us that he has found a complete solution of the great question which involves the nature and mode of the Divine Existence. We find no evidence in the article before us that the writer in his investigations has arrived at any such result. The article is long, and in our judgment not calculated to subserve any important purpose. Until we can comprehend several sub-objects of inferior magnitude, which concern our own nature and relations, we shall not be likely to comprehend what no faulted mind of man or angel can ever fathom—the being of God. If any man has an idea that he can fly to the sun, we would recommend him to first try his plumbas by a flight over Trinity Church steeps.

*The Buffalo Republic* is on our exchange list, and is forwarded regularly; we shall be pleased to hear from the editor at his convenience.

**Persons** who send communications intended for the press should, if they desire to preserve them, invariably retain a copy, so as to preclude the necessity for our returning them in case they are not published. Among the mass of rejected papers they are extremely liable to be lost, and we can not be responsible for the safe keeping of communications which, in our judgment, are of no value.

## A NEW PAPER IN NEW YORK.

Messrs. Whitney and Conklin have issued three numbers of a new journal, entitled "*MESSENGER OF LIGHT*, devoted to the Extension of Spiritual Knowledge."

In this country a man is privileged to select such a sphere of action as is best suited to his faculties and inclinations; and we rejoice that it is so, for this is the natural right of every man; and the place to which the individual is most strongly attracted is frequently the only one wherein he is likely to succeed. Actuated, we doubt not, by a laudable desire to advance the truth, the proprietors of the new paper have been moved to embark in their present enterprise, and for this purpose, and also to afford accommodations for public and private circles, have rented commodious apartments at No. 553 Broadway. They have already commenced operations in earnest, and with the most sanguine hopes of success.

The world is gross and sensual; it needs to be refined and spiritualized, and whoever is qualified to labor well and wisely may find ample room and business to employ all his faculties and energies. The world may not thank him for his labor of love, but the smallest service rendered to such a cause is far more honorable than the proud achievements which have so often won the plaudits of thoughtless millions. Our best wishes accompany all who think, speak, and act with a view to the accomplishment of a righteous purpose, and the prayers of thousands are daily offered for the success of every effort that has for its object the mental, moral, and spiritual enfranchisement of the world. We are prone to believe that those who engage in this cause, with an enlightened, reverent, and rational spirit, will do good; and in every case which properly answers this description there may be, and indeed *must be*, an honorable triumph even in what the world may characterize as a failure.

Should the *Messenger of Light* succeed, it will be evident enough to us that it was demanded, and that the effort to establish it is not premature. Whether the present state of the movement warrants the sanguine hopes of the proprietors, the future will determine. We hope that they will be prospered in every effort to "do good and to communicate," but our own expectations have been graduated by severe experience and careful observation.

It is but a short time since we were called to record the discontinuance of the *Reformer*, a large and interesting paper published in this city, and devoted mainly to the same cause. That journal was commenced, as we were repeatedly assured, under very favorable auspices, but it expired at the end of a few months for want of adequate support. Besides the unexpected birth and sudden death of the *Reformer*, the spiritual movement has already witnessed the advent and departure of the following-named journals: the *Spirit World*, published in Boston; the *Spirit Messenger*, originally published in Springfield, Mass., but subsequently removed to this city, and continued under the title of the *Journal of Progress*; *Light from the Spirit World*, published in St. Louis, Mo.; the *Carrier Dove*, published in Philadelphia; the *Mountain Dove Journal*, published in Virginia; also, a paper entitled the *Spiritual Advocate*, and we believe one or two others should be added to the list. Now if this fearful mortality among spiritual papers is not owing to their premature birth or to bad nursing, we know not what to ascribe it to. We opine that the surviving members of the family are, for the most part, troubled with physical debility, and will require careful treatment and a more generous support to sustain them long. Nevertheless, we shall be glad to have the members of this family increase and multiply, provided the offspring can only be well constituted and vigorous; but we hope to be spared the unpleasant necessity of witnessing a continuance of these spasmodic beginnings and endings of life in the embryonic forms of new journals, conceived by accident and brought forth before the time.

In these remarks we intend no disrespect to those who have been unsuccessful in such enterprises. We are sure that many of them have labored faithfully with an honest purpose, and we believe that, in one way or another, they have been instrumental in doing good. We respect their motives, and trust that in some way they have been suitably rewarded for all their sacrifices. At the same time, we can not disguise the fact, that the frequent discontinuance of public journals, professedly devoted to Spiritualism, tends to weaken the general confidence in the stability of all that remain, and to produce an impression that the whole movement is the unsubstantial creation of a morbid restlessness or feverish excitement.

The *Messenger of Light* is very near the size of the *TELEGRAPH*; the subscription price is two dollars; it is well printed, and makes a good appearance. Of its literary merits and general editorial management we can judge better hereafter. It would not be fair to pass a decisive opinion until our neighbors have had time to distribute and organize their forces.

We learn that the *Messenger* has the purse of a heavy capitalist pledged for its support. Specimen copies can be seen at this office. Those who wish to subscribe should call on the publishers, or address Whitney and Conklin, 553 Broadway.

**THE IRVING HOUSE.**—Our spiritual friends from all parts of the country who may have occasion to visit this city, in pursuit of business or pleasure, will find the *Irving* one of our best hotels, and in all respects adapted to promote their ease, comfort, and pleasure. The house is admirably kept. Mr. Burroughs is one of the most generous and gentlemanly proprietors, and his truly kind-hearted lady is eminently qualified for her responsible position.

## THE PHASE OF THE AGE.

Setting aside the question, "Is it productive of the happiest results?" we must regard the age in which we live as the most remarkable in the history of the world. The best practical philosophers, and keenest scrutinizers of the times, are completely nonplussed as to a proper name by which to analyze it. The golden, iron, pastoral, and dark ages are applied to eras that were soluble—eras distinctly featured by some single, rare peculiarity; but ours has none such. It is a chameleon. We must not call it the progressive age; that would imply that all before it had stood stock still; neither the suggestive, inventive, or diffusive age; these are too weak. They do not embrace the whole spirit of the times.

I look on this as the transition age. We were yesterday in chrysalis; we are to-day a butterfly; and what we shall be to-morrow is a yet enfolded secret. So rapid and startling are the changes, that there is no longer any fixed science. We scarcely wait to let an invention or discovery cool, before it is tossed into the alembic tester, and new and more radiant shapes and colors are created to it. The perfect ore and heat-resisting gems are found by our new blasts soluble as wax, as drossy as native dirt. Well may the miser tremble for his coins, lost by some rare turn up they are spirited away from his iron chest, or found base and counterfeit. "Touch and take," there is no other safe motto. If we wait to consider or reflect, the straight stick has become crooked. Every day we make application of that wise old fable; and if we were but half as wise, we should never venture beyond the edge of the forest.

Not only domestic utensils, the corn mortars, and wooden plows, but the spirits of law, logic, philosophy, and religion shift their phases almost as suddenly and mechanically as post-coach systems. We learn to feel and think mercurially; and our thermometer is, "What is the news?" On that hangs the rope at whose end we all dangle. That is the pivot or fulcrum with which, and a proper lever, Archimedes would have overturned the world. It matters little that he died young—young, I mean, in the ages—his levers and capstans, his wedges and screws, have found an improver; and the world in which he lived is thoroughly enough overturned.

They were wonderful toils, those of Hercules; but he wrought only with his hands—with human, physical force—against lions and monster hydras. We kill off all that breed sitting in the easiest patent chairs. Hercules lived and died safely for his fame. Our age, prophesied by Sir Thomas Moore, would have transcended Utopia itself. Fiction in the brains of madmen and visionary poets are statistical compared with our array of facts. The enchanted valleys of Rabelais, with aerial Bucephalus carrying peasants suddenly transformed to kings, have found a resting-place, and are no longer nightmare of the pleasantest kind, nor idle day-dreams. On our broad republican soil we are all kings, crowned by God, and in the main invested alike. Who that lives with his eyes open, and a score of years, has not seen the air clest as though it were thick, palpable, like a sea?

Yes, the news is our pivot—a weekly balance-sheet in every man's hands, determines what shall be his next step. To the right or left is a chance while we are on one leg. We sleep and wake, scarce knowing whether the starry heavens have not shifted altitude. We are like a traveler, if not with pouch full of bread and cheese, yet with enough habituation to shift from one day's train to another; and our lives are as various of incident as though we were on busy, swift wheels. They were wonderful toils, those of Hercules; but he wrought only with his hands—with human, physical force—against lions and monster hydras. We kill off all that breed sitting in the easiest patent chairs. Hercules lived and died safely for his fame. Our age, prophesied by Sir Thomas Moore, would have transcended Utopia itself. Fiction in the brains of madmen and visionary poets are statistical compared with our array of facts. The enchanted valleys of Rabelais, with aerial Bucephalus carrying peasants suddenly transformed to kings, have found a resting-place, and are no longer nightmare of the pleasantest kind, nor idle day-dreams. On our broad republican soil we are all kings, crowned by God, and in the main invested alike. Who that lives with his eyes open, and a score of years, has not seen the air clest as though it were thick, palpable, like a sea?

During the following night the young ladies heard a rustling noise in the direction of the window and among some clothes, and then the sound of footsteps in their room. They were both awake at the time, but each supposed the other to be asleep. The sounds continued, coming nearer and growing louder, until Miss M. and her friend became so terrified that they called other members of the family to their apartment, which was carefully searched without disclosing the cause of the unusual sounds. Some of the parties are disposed to ascribe these phenomena to the same agents which are now so widely employed in the production of similar effects.

angel-dom, dance down from their thrones of dust, flinging wide their barbaric clasps—fetters of knowledge—and gladden a world-wide multitude of hungry and thirsting hearts.

There are no longer any common men. "That fellow" is an obsolete term, while fools, clowns, servants, and slaves are pensioned with the real or honorary titles of men. As sad as the change must be, and is, for those who have kept the world's guardianship so long, yet great is the joy of the freed and new-breathing millions, who, while they bowed down, made little or no complaint. We have the elements now at our will. The wind can not stay us, nor the sea; the air yields to our tread, and the mountains melt and whirl at our command. Our feet are iron; our hands are steel; our breath is steam, and our brain lightning. If we make not the earth a servant, as she has made us slaves, it is not from want of guiding reins, nor whip, nor spurs.

And yet, with all our gigantic might, we can not build the towers, temples, and pyramids of the ancient time. And why? Because ours is the practical as well as the transition age—an age in which man considers himself. There are no longer "hewers of wood and drawers of water" to upheave the colossal walls for a penny a day—as when St. Paul's rose into a wondrous and age-enduring monument. No longer are there men so fated to desert with their blood, that tyrants may be deified, in Ammon! And what is to be the climax, with this our ascending scale, shall puzzle sight-seers with keener eyes than watch the heavens for twinkling stars. The earth once subdued, its mountains cast down and waste places lifted up, as there is in our means of appliance more than visionary promise, and there is only left the law of kindness to be enforced, to link heart to heart, hamlet to hamlet, nation to nation, until the Eden of Nature is restored. Beautiful age this of transition—leaving no stone unturned, no bitterness unarbitrated, no feud hopeless, but all bright, smiling, ominous of a true millennium for mankind.

C. D. S.

## CURIOUS INCIDENTS.

In the summer of 1852, while Miss Mallory, of Bridgeport, was visiting some friends in a neighboring village, she occupied the same sleeping apartment with a Miss K. One day, while the young ladies were dressing, they suddenly heard an unusual sound, and on looking up discovered that a bird of singular appearance, with black and white plumage, had entered at the open window and was flying about the room. Other persons aided in capturing the bird, which was put in a cage. The strange visitor exhibited no fear, but immediately commenced singing in a singular strain, and in the course of a few minutes the tune was wholly changed not less than three times. At length its notes began to grow feeble, and the strain gradually died away. The bird now seemed to be drowsy and inactive; it gasped, fell from its perch, and remained on its back, apparently dead or dying. Its appearance excited the sympathies of the ladies, and they opened the cage, when, instantly, the bird started from its apparently almost lifeless state and flew away.

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## RAISING THE PATIENT AND THE BED.

In the *Practical Christian* of Feb. 25th, the editor relates an interesting case of healing by the Spirits, accompanied by other remarkable phenomena. Mr. C. Wilcox, of East Blackstone, had a nephew who was alarmingly ill of lung fever. Mrs. Wilcox is a medium, and the Spirits promised her that the boy should recover. While Mrs. W. was bending over the little sufferer and trying to lift him into a more comfortable position, the entire head of the bed, together with the heavy headboard, was raised some ten inches from the floor and in this manner the Spirits gave responses and communicated freely respecting his case. When the patient was restless and in pain, the invisible powers would act through the hands of Mrs. W., allaying the nervous irritability and putting him to sleep. We extract a single paragraph, in which the most striking part of the performance is described:

On the 15th inst., as Mrs. W. was attending him, the whole bed, with the headboard, was raised completely from the floor, and swung gently back and forth for several minutes. The sick boy, now slowly improving, was deeply interested and pleased at receiving such a token of kind regard from the Spirits. So he asked his aunt what he should say to them. She directed him. Whereupon, still waving the whole bed in mid air, they responded to the child by rapping with the front legs of the headboard on the floor. Subsequently, the family were informed through the rappings that the Spirit of a deceased physician, formerly well known to them, had presided over these manifestations, and full explanations were obtained.

## TELEGRAPHING, ETC., BY SPIRITS.

D. W. Scott, writing from Cuba, N. Y., to Adin Ballou, editor of the *Practical Christian*, relates several interesting facts illustrative of the presence and identity of Spirits. The more important examples purported to be the work of Augustus A. Ballou, a departed son of the editor, who was greatly and deservedly esteemed while in the body. We extract the subjoined paragraphs from Mr. Scott's letter:

One evening Augustus delivered a lecture through Cora, in our circle at Lake Mills, concerning heaven and hell, as being a state or condition of the mind, the Spirit-land a place, etc. After closing the discourse, he said he must leave immediately and go to Waterloo—that there was a gathering there, and a medium from Sun Prairie through whom he could speak. This was about forty-five minutes past seven. We ascertained the next day that about that moment Mr. Budlong, of Sun Prairie, was entranced, and the Spirit announced his name to be A. A. Ballou, who spoke a communication concerning heaven and hell, as being a state or condition of the mind, the Spirit-land a place, etc.—the identical subject, word for word, that was delivered to us a few minutes before. The distance between the two places is eight miles; and we had no knowledge of their meeting, nor they of ours.

Another.—Augustus informed us that he was making demonstrations through several media in Western New York, in the neighborhood where he formerly lived, and that he had finally made himself known there. In a few weeks we received a letter from our friends in N. Y., giving a history of their experience in spiritual intercourse. Several Spirits had communicated to them, and last of all Augustus came, assuming that he was the identical A. A. Ballou that controlled Cora in Wisconsin. And to confirm them as to the fact, he said through the rappings that in just thirteen days they would receive a letter from Lozeny, Cora's mother. The letter came at the precise time predicted.

had nearly reached my seventh year, I daily studied the book of nature by minutely observing the different varieties of plants and flowers, and by watching the habits and character of animals, and the birds, who built their nests amid the branches of the grove, where I often improvised little songs in imitation of their vocal melody; and thus, in the daily enjoyment of these simple and humble pleasures, the hours passed peacefully and happily away.

I have lingered too long over these reminiscences, interesting to no one but myself, and will hasten to close by the relation of an incident so extraordinary in character that the materialistic reader may, perchance, doubt the veracity of the narrator, but which is, nevertheless, even to the utmost minute, strictly true. The incident to which I allude left upon my mind an impression so salutary and abiding that, even in those hours of deepest gloom, which sometimes overshadow the bravest spirit, I never relaxed my hold upon that precious promise of Jehovah, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and let thy fatherless children trust in me."

After some little delay in the completion of a new and inexpensive wardrobe, I was at length equipped for school. It was a beautiful June morning, redolent of soft and balmy air, rendered vocal by the caroling of birds upon the wing. I sauntered leisurely along with my little basket swinging on my arm, happy in the contemplation of the beautiful scene around me, which appeared adorned in that inexpressible charm of novelty which, in early youth, so intensifies our simple joys. The golden light of the morning sun lingered lovingly upon the green grassy slopes of the hillside and on the distant wooded heights, illuminating with a soft, burnished light the slant roofs of the houses and the figure of the angel with his glittering wings and golden trumpet, which surrounded the village spire, who seemed ever about to blow one thrilling blast to arouse the slumberous nations of the dead. The very air seemed interposed with something of a divine presence, which seemed to radiate in every line of light, and to glide mysteriously in every passing shade. The sight of the grand and beautiful in nature ever inspires me with the feeling as though my soul were possessed of wings, which it longed to unfurl, and to soar aloft far up beyond the cloudless sky and become a participant of the bliss and the joys of heaven. These sublime aspirations of the spirit to ascend to its future home often visit me in sickness to a sense of faintness and dissolution. But never when in health have I been more overpowered by their influence than on that beautiful June morning, when wending my way to the village school. It seemed as if some prescient and benevolent spirit, by lifting my thoughts so intensely heavenward, sought to prepare me to bear with patience the tyranny and injustice to which many a friendless child is exposed, especially if backward in learning, when first introduced amid that motley assemblage of good, bad, and indifferent, which not unfrequently constitutes a refractory village school. The school which I entered numbered over a hundred pupils, from the age of sixteen downward. The seats were raised one above another, those occupied by the first class being elevated several feet from the level of the floor.

The reader will please imagine a tall, noble-looking man, in the prime of life, of benign aspect and nobly-developed figure, leading by the hand a little girl of not unpleasing features, very fair complexion, soft, fine hair of amber hue, dark eyes, which were either illuminated by the light of an inward joy, or rendered pensive by a gentle sadness. This little girl, who was rather tall of her age, and who the reader will recognize as the heroine of these pages, occupied the lowest seat in the room, scarce raised above the level of the floor.

The mournful sadness which fell upon my spirit, consequent upon my isolated and mortifying position, as contrasted with others of my age, who occupied the middle seats, and belonged to the second class, was often alleviated by the kindness of the teacher, who seemed to observe with delight the ease and rapidity with which I mastered the elementary lessons. I had now been at school about three weeks. Commencing with the alphabet, I had progressed to words of two syllables. Nancy J., the teacher's daughter, and only child, was near my own age, and was considered the best scholar of her age in school. This little girl, who was imperious and tyrannical in disposition, had victimized me from the first—often taunting me with my ignorance, to which I made no reply. At this period, my habitual shyness having worn off a little, I accepted an invitation from one of the pupils to join the little girls at play upon the green grass-plot in front of the house. At the moment I closed hands with the circle, a violent blow upon the head felled me to the ground. I knew it was Nancy J. who struck me; I saw her spring toward me, but not in time to avoid the blow. Stunned and bewildered by my fall, I staggered forward a few paces, a small stream of blood issuing from my mouth. Two or three of the girls, horrified at this outrage, wished to assist me; but I waved them back with a gesture of command they were fain to obey. As the wounded deer seeks the covert of the deepest wood, that he may die in peace, far removed from his enemies, thus instinctively I sought to hide my grief beneath the shadow of a large elm tree a few rods distant, and on reaching it, sank unconscious at its base. When I awoke from my stupor, one agonized cry of earnest entreaty welled from my almost broken heart, blended with firm faith that God would remove the stigma of ignorance and teach me to read. Hitherto my trials had been purely mental: now I had been struck down by a cruel blow, which had ruptured a blood-vessel and endangered my life, simply for presuming to associate with those having the advantage of an earlier attendance at school than myself. Oppressed with a deadly faintness, I lay in sweet and solemn expectancy of the ministrations of my guardian angel, not doubting for a moment the fulfillment of my request. Deem not this recital puerile and childlike, dear reader. Here was an exhibition of that simple and trusting faith which our Saviour enjoined upon his disciples, and which, in this materialistic age, had well-nigh passed from the earth. There are moments in life when the fleshly veil which so often impedes our spiritual advancement, and darkens the perception of God's love and mercy to the soul, is withdrawn from our view. It was not by an audible voice, but by an illumination of the interior consciousness, that the friendless child intuitively divined her course. A beautiful repose lay upon her spirit. The sweet dove of peace folded its brooding wings lovingly about her heart, as she retraced her way to the vacant schoolroom. Beneath the desk lay Nancy J.'s Bible. Kneeling, she opened it at the thirty-seventh Psalm, which she read, not only with perfect ease, but with that eloquent and graceful intonation which gained for her, from that day, not only in that school, but in all others subsequently attended, the title of a model reader. I had spent the afternoon striving to brace my resolution to apprise Mr. J. of my newly-acquired gift.

T. L. HARRIS has returned from his Southern tour, and will remain in this vicinity until the first of May. In the mean time, those having occasion to correspond with Br. H., can address him at this office.

## DIGEST OF CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. J. K., of Westerly, R. I., sends us the following paragraph which he clipped from the *Inverness Courier*, which a friend in Scotland had sent him. The paragraph occurs in a letter written to that paper by a London correspondent:

A pretty little experiment—which has been long known in England, but which I do not believe so familiar in the north, and which illustrates on a small scale the table-turning principle—may be tried in this way. Take a ring—gold is best, and the lighter the better—attach a thread to it; then suspend the ring by passing a thread between the fore-finger and thumb of the right hand—which should be kept widely on the stretch, so that the thread may rest upon the crossing nerve—and hold the other end of the line in the left hand. Now, placing your elbow on the table to keep it perfectly steady, let the ring drop half-way down an empty tumbler, and think steadily of a number—say an hour. After a longer or shorter interval, generally in a couple of minutes, the ring begins to vibrate, and the motion becomes the faster the more steadily the experimenter keeps the number thought of in his mind, until the ring at last peaks the actual amount of the sum on the sides of the tumbler; after which, and this is very curious, it immediately ceases its movements. This little piece of wizardry astonishes folks who are not familiar with it. The country English have a superstition that if the ring be a wedding one, and the glass half full of water, the former will sound the real hour, even although the operator know nothing of it. This, however, is mere nonsense. The other is accounted for on philosophic principles.

Our correspondent was induced to try this experiment, and obtained the results specified, together with the following additional particulars: While holding the pendent ring in the tumbler, it occurred to him to ask whether Spirits might not have some agency in causing its vibrations, and requested that for an affirmative answer the ring might strike six times, and for a negative, twice. Immediately the ring struck six times on the side of the tumbler. For a further assurance he concluded to reverse the form of the test, and ask that the ring might strike twice if an affirmative answer was intended, and six times if a negative; when immediately the ring struck twice. He then, without asking any particular question, requested that something might be done to further assure him that the phenomenon was the work of Spirits, if such were the case? The ring struck eighteen times and stopped. After reflecting for a moment, he remembered that eighteen years was the age of his son when he died. Still further to prove that the motion of the ring was not involuntarily made by himself, he took a piece of wire about twelve inches long, and suspended three rings from it, in as many tumblers, about equidistant from each other. He found that, by requests addressed to the Spirits, these rings would move separately or altogether, in the same or in opposite directions, as he might request. The rings would in like manner seem to indicate the number of Spirits that were present, respond to their names, etc. The experiment is certainly a curious one, and is well worth a repetition until its alleged results are either verified or disproved.

S. H. G., of Niles, Michigan, writes that he, with a party of his friends, recently, without having ever witnessed any spiritual manifestations, and while himself and the whole party were skeptical concerning them, assembled around a table, placing their hands upon it, and after sitting half an hour were gratified in witnessing decided and powerful movements of the table in various directions in the room. It was afterward ascertained that these movements occurred equally well when only a certain young girl in the circle touched the table. A circle was formed on a subsequent occasion, when the hand of a little daughter of our correspondent was moved, and when a pencil was placed in it, and the Spirits were requested to write something, various names of departed friends, and various short sentences were written, one or two of which were responses, correctly given, to mental requests. *The Little girl had never written a word before that time.* While her hand was being moved in writing, she did not look upon the paper, and yet the 't's were dotted and the 'l's crossed, and every thing was regular and legible. What our correspondent thinks inexplicable is, that no manifestation could be received through the little girl after that day; but this fact, we think, affords pretty strong presumptive evidence that the child had not the power to make the manifestations without the assistance of a foreign agent, and increases the cogency of the proof of Spirit-interference in the first instance.

Mr. E. HALE, writing from Madison, Ohio, where he had recently been lecturing, says, that Mrs. FERRER, of that place, while sitting quietly with her family, not suspecting that there was any derangement of the functions of her system, was suddenly seized with an involuntary vibration of her hand against her breast, and was told by a Spirit that there was a partial stoppage of the circulation in the pulmonary artery, and that that motion of her hand against her chest was intended to prevent an entire stoppage, and consequent death. These involuntary motions of the hand continued without interruption for three hours, when she became exhausted; but meanwhile a physician had been brought by direction of the Spirits, to give her quieting medicine, and another medium, a Mrs. Ormsby, had been brought to the house by a spiritual impression that she must go there immediately for a purpose which she would learn on arriving. The physician, in his diagnosis of the case, did not differ essentially from the Spirits, and the medium who was brought was set to pounding the patient upon the chest. Between the two, the lady was soon placed beyond danger. It was the opinion of herself and the parties present, that her life was in that manner saved.

CLOSE OF THE VOLUME.—The friends of Spiritualism and of the TELEGRAPH will please bear in mind that the current volume will close with the last week in April, and that we shall commence Vol. III. with the beginning of May. We shall make some improvements in the ensuing volume; the subscription price will remain the same as at present.

Since the commencement of the current volume the interest in the subject, to which our paper is chiefly devoted, has extended far and wide, and thousands are now interested who one year ago treated the subject with indifference. We will, therefore, thank our friends to furnish us with a list of names of persons whom they may presume to be now in a condition to look at the subject, and we will send them the first number of the new volume.

THAT PLAGIARISM.—Abby Goodwin, of Salem, N. Y., writes us in corroboration of the charge of an anonymous correspondent, a week or two since, that the poem published in the TELEGRAPH, entitled "The Summer Midnight," was a plagiarism on a poem written by the late James Wallis Eastburn. Miss or Mrs. Goodwin has seen the poem under date of July 4th, 1844, and compared it with the publication in the TELEGRAPH, and found the two identical.

We received a brief note from A. F. Cunningham, Esq., several days since, which we should have inserted this week,

but it has been mislaid and lost. Suffice it that we are altogether disposed to acquit Mr. Cunningham and his daughter of all conscious wrong or error. The lines were read by several poets and critics in this city, not one of whom had any recollection of having seen them before. This is not the first time that a Spirit has repeated, in one way or another, a poem composed on earth without indicating its authorship.

THE MEMORIAL.—The names attached to the Memorial have been pasted on thin muslin, and the whole is to be bound, mounted on a roller, and put up in a box made for that purpose. The whole presents a somewhat formidable appearance, being about four hundred feet long! This is by far the longest argument for Spiritualism which has yet been offered, but it required many thousands to frame it. The Editor goes to Washington with it this week.

## NEW YORK CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS.

TUESDAY EVENING, March 14, 1854.

MR. PRAY spoke of the conventional ideas of dignity as being very erroneous, particularly with regard to spiritual matters. The moving of tables appears to modern conventionalism as undignified and trifling; but it would be well to remember the lowly origin and unpretending acts of charity seen in the founder of Christianity. The great acts of his life, viewed from the earth side merely, were devoid of all claim to dignity in the popular sense. His miracles heal the sick and feed the hungry; they not overturn kingdoms, nor hang themselves up in mid-heaven as signs of dignified, but ominous portent—nothing of the sort. He claimed no sanction from, or sympathy with, the prevailing idea of dignity existing there now. But these simple deeds of his viewed in their spiritual origin—scanned as to their character and source—are not merely dignified, they are sublime. So of these lowly table movements; viewed as existing facts, they present a scientific problem of vast importance, and therefore are not to be despised; but looked at from their demonstrably spiritual origin, they carry with them an ineffable weight of glory, before which all conventional notions of pomp and pride shrink to less than nothing. They infallibly lead us to something higher and holier. Nay, they lead to Infinite himself! Let us be careful, therefore, how we condemn the apparently trifling phenomena; for, be it ever so humble, a manifestation that has the undoubted signet of spirituality on its despised brow has no earthly scale able to weigh its value, nor earthly standard competent to measure its dignity.

MR. WOODMAN wished to explain some remarks of his at the last meeting which had been misunderstood. His meaning was, that error, bigotry, and superstition should be treated as enemies, not the persons who are the subjects of them. He differs with Mr. Davis. Man governs circumstances. He is not their slave. Man himself is the most important circumstance in the universe, and God intends him to rule and modify all others. We have a sure prophecy of this in the triumphs of human art already achieved.

MR. DAVIS remarked that the purpose of this Conference was foreign to the discussion of the subject alluded to by Mr. Woodman. The object here is an inquiry into the solidity of the spiritual hypothesis. He fully accepted it as true. At first he supposed it was some hidden power of the mind, or some successful trick, perhaps, but the wonderful things he had witnessed compelled him to adopt the spiritual faith. They would stand the test of trial by their fruits. In his experience he had found them to breathe charity and human reform in all their modes of appearance. They preach equality, brotherhood, and eternal life beyond the grave—the very quintessence of Christianity. He thinks the doctrine of man's subjection to circumstances the only true basis of charity.

He concluded by urging a true social reform founded on real spiritual Christianity.

DR. GRAY read some communications given at different times in the circle of which he is a member.

[Dr. Gray did not furnish a report of his remarks, with the communications which were read before the Conference. S. B. Brittan was left to report his own speech, and has, after mature deliberation, unanimously resolved to leave it unreported.—Ed.]

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Just as we were about sending our paper to press we received the following brief note from General Bullard. The object here is an inquiry into the solidity of the spiritual hypothesis. He fully accepted it as true. At first he supposed it was some hidden power of the mind, or some successful trick, perhaps, but the wonderful things he had witnessed compelled him to adopt the spiritual faith. They would stand the test of trial by their fruits. In his experience he had found them to breathe charity and human reform in all their modes of appearance. They preach equality, brotherhood, and eternal life beyond the grave—the very quintessence of Christianity. He thinks the doctrine of man's subjection to circumstances the only true basis of charity.

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At DUBUQUE, IOWA, on the 3d inst., of apoplexy, HARRIET, wife of C. L. HARVEY, and daughter of the late LYMAN PHILIPPE, of ALBANY, N. Y., aged twenty years.

MRS. HARVEY was the daughter-in-law of our worthy friend, R. P. AMBLER. We have known her since she was a child. When we last saw her, which was about two years since, she was unmarried; the bloom of health was on her cheek, and the fire of hope kindled in her soft, blue eye. The fair form is now pulseless and still, the cheek pale, and the eye has lost its sparkle; but we may rejoice that this is only the mortal shrine from which the divinity has departed.—ED.

At BRIDGEPORT, CONN., on Saturday, 18th instant, the spirit of FRANCIS PHILLIPS, infant son of Henry P. and Sarah H. PORTER, was separated from its corporeal relations at the early age of 8 months and 15 days.

"Twine ye the larp with a myrtle wreath,  
O'er its chords a hush to shed;  
Oh, tenderly sweep it at ye brest,  
A strain for the early dead."—ED.

On Saturday, March 4th, 1854, Mr. J. F. OSTRANDER, of UNIONVILLE, WESTCHESTER CO., N. Y., aged 34 years.

For many years Mr. O. had labored, more or less, under a pulmonary disease, but within the last twelve months his health began to rapidly decline, and continued to do so until the terminus of his mortal career. During this latter period he was fully sustained and comforted by an undoubting faith in Spiritualism. This faith continued to cheer and console him to his last moments, although he was subjected to bitter persecution and clerical denunciation. He left a wife and five children to mourn his untimely exit from the tangible form. The writer is called upon to officiate at the funeral obsequies, endeavored to dispense the consolation of heavenly and divine truth in a discourse concerning organization, life, so-called "death," the spirit-world, and its connection with the present state. May heaven's blessing rest with the bereaved!—W. F.

## TEST QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

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INSANITY SPIRITUALLY CURED.—A young man named ALFRED RHODES, about eighteen years of age, of LYNN, MASS., had, owing to a nervous affection, been insane from childhood, and had been unable to do the least thing toward procuring a livelihood. Some eighteen months ago the parents of the young man were led to consult a Miss SMITH, a spirit-medium and water-cure physician, who resided at HIGH ROCK COTTAGE. Miss SMITH was impressed with a series of prescriptions, which, together with the more direct application of spirit-influence, and manipulations through Mr. JOHN M. SPEAR, have resulted apparently in a complete and permanent cure of the boy, and he is now able to earn his livelihood with ease. Let Spiritualism in this instance, with many others, have the credit of accomplishing that which the ordinary medical practice would probably never have effected.

## TO PHYSICIANS—SPIRITUALISTS.

DENISON, HAMILTON CO., IND., March 13, 1854.

BROTHERS PARTRIDGE AND BRITtan:

Will you please give notice in the columns of the TELEGRAPH that we wish a good physician to come to this place—one that is a Spiritualist. Such a one can be assured of having an extensive patronage. This is a new village, surrounded with a splendid and fertile country, which is in a thriving condition. Spiritualism has recently found its way here, and is progressing to an alarming extent to the clergy and their followers. Fraternally, B. W. WILLIAMS.

## FACTS AND REMARKS.

CONFERENCE OF MARCH 16.—The Thursday evening Conference at this office, of last week, was opened by MR. C. PARTRIDGE, who spoke of the progress and present state of the cause of Spiritualism. He remarked, in substance, that it numbered many more believers than superficial appearances would indicate, and that these believers might be found among lawyers, physicians, legislators, clergymen, and church members, who shrink from an avowal of their opinions through fear of persecution or the loss of popular favor. MR. P. strongly urged the propriety of mental freedom of every one's fearlessly stating his convictions on all subjects, and allowing them to grapple with their opposites, with the full confidence that truth will ultimately prevail. MR. FISHBROUGH arose to explain the position of an absent person whose course MR. P. had criticized in the course of his remarks. DR. YOUNG had a word to say about those who believe in devils, and yet do not admit that there are any human spirits who communicate with mortals. He said he had heretofore been reported as denouncing men for the want of faith, but that it was a mistake, as he had only denounced them for want of courage to avow their faith, and he wished this correction to be made. He went on to amplify this denunciation in good round terms. D. G. TAYLOR said he had recently been informed of two or three church members in whose presence, for many years past, strange demonstrations would frequently occur, such as are now known to be produced by departed spirits. Among these persons is an aged lady whom he had gone to see, and in whose presence articles of furniture would frequently move, without visible contact, from place to place, in the room. MR. PARTRIDGE related a similar fact concerning the paymaster of a certain bank in this city, who, though stoutly opposed to Spiritualism, declared that tables, etc., would mysteriously move about the room with his fingers slightly in contact with them, and that they have sometimes spelled out intelligible communications concerning matters about which he is ignorant. MR. LYON, of FALL RIVER, related some facts in his early experience of Spiritualism. MR. OL'COTT, of OHIO, gave an interesting account of a "mental telegraph" which is now in process of arrangement by a Mr. McALLISTER. The important discovery of MR. MCALISTER, as we understand, consisted of different magnetic extracts from the vegetable kingdom, which, by an arrangement of batteries, are conductible through wires to any distance, and in such degrees of force as to induce chairokinesis and the thought-reading condition in any two persons at the opposite ends of the wires, who may desire to communicate. MR. FISHBROUGH spoke of the influence of particular applications of plants and drugs, and of the emanations of different terrestrial and celestial objects, in producing psychological states, and moving the powers of the visible and invisible worlds, as being well known to the ancient magicians. MR. OL'COTT related some cases of presentations. DR. YOUNG called in question what he understood to be of MR. FISHBROUGH'S positions, and MR. F. replied. The meeting then closed.

CASES OF PRESENTIMENT.—The cases of presentiment related by MR. OLCOTT, of OHIO, at the Thursday evening Conference of last week, were these: The first was that of an engineer of a steamboat on the OHIO RIVER, who, while the boat was lying in port, became possessed with the idea that if he went with her on the next trip he would certainly lose his life. He resolved not to go, but the managers of the boat came and urged the master upon him as a duty, mentioning that that was the last trip which the boat was to make for the season, and that they could not get another engineer to take his place; and he finally yielded to their solicitations, though with great reluctance. During the trip an accident occurred which led to his loss of life.

The other case was this: A physician of this city was intending to sail with the steamer SAN FRANCISCO on her recent disastrous voyage. A few days before she sailed, the physician's wife became deeply impressed that the vessel was destined to be wrecked, and that if her husband embarked in her he would be lost. As this impression grew stronger as the hour of her sailing approached, the gentleman concluded to yield to his wife's entreaty not to embark in her. He had been intrusted with some public commission which it was the object of the proposed voyage to execute, and he knew that the duty of immediate embarkation would be urged by the officer who was to bring his papers on the day the vessel was expected to sail. On that day, therefore, he contrived to be absent from home, and when the officer came with his papers, his wife could give no account of him. The next morning the officer again came, and left the papers with his wife, with the information that the vessel had sailed, and that he would now be compelled to wait for the next steamer. Thus, by an interior monitor kindly given from the higher world, he escaped the disaster which befell that ill-fated ship.

OPPOSED BY CARNAL WARRIORS.—One evening quite recently, as a party of some ten persons, mostly females, were quietly seated around a table at the house of a Mrs. RICE, of EAST Weymouth, MASS., where they had suddenly started by a tremendous crash directly under the window of the room wherein they were seated. The concussion was so violent as to break the windows, and the room was instantly filled with a volume of sulphurous smoke. The ladies were much alarmed, and one of them, particularly, was seized with a fainting fit, from which she was with difficulty revived. Some overzealous opponents of Spiritualism, for want of a more powerful argument to put it down, had dragged a cannon to the window and fired it. We suppose that this may pass for a new specimen of carnal warfare.

A DREAM.—Brother WHITMORE, of the BOSTON TRUMPET AND UNIVERSALIST MAGAZINE, has had a dream which is probably not a dream, though he sets it down as such. He says: "We had a visit from the spirit of Father BALLEAU. Dr. BALLEAU and myself were together. Father BALLEAU came suddenly into the room where we were, as if he had just returned from a journey. We were very much surprised to see him, for we knew he was dead. He smiled and saluted us as he used to in the days of his flesh. 'Why, Father BALLEAU!' we exclaimed, 'how can you be here—you are dead!' 'Oh, children!' said he, 'death is nothing—death is no matter of dread—all is bright where I have been.' His face shone with heavenly light; he continued to smile with great grace; the spell that came upon us was delightful while it lasted; but we awoke—it was night—it was a dream."

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## Interesting Miscellany.

## REPLY TO A FRIEND.

BY VIOLA ODORATA.

You say it is wrong to think it is Spirits Soothing my heart and calming my fears; That they're ever engaged in service more holy, In serving their God through eternity's years, You feel it is wrong to think that our dear ones Still love as of old, still comfort and bless, While raising the soul and pointing it upward To the land of reunion, the bright land of rest. You think, then, it's wrong to receive good impressions, If given by souls freed from all earthly dross; That however wise may be the divulgings, 'Tis but a sure test that the poor soul is lost. No, no! 'tis pure love, of Heaven's bestowing, That draws the soul downward, to mingle awhile With the cherished of earth, and light their deep darkness With fair beams of faith and hope's cheering smile. It can not be wrong for God to send blessings On the wings of his angels, the Spirits of light; It can not be wrong to cheer the desponding With hopes of reunion—"No, no! it is right."

## A LETTER FROM MRS. WHITMAN.

The following letter to the editor of the *Tribune* we copy from that journal. Mrs. Whitman's communications respecting the spiritual phenomena, which have occasionally appeared in the secular papers, have all been characterized by great candor, good sense, and an accurate appreciation of the nature and claims of the subject. We know of no lady who is better fitted by nature, and a healthful mental and moral discipline, to exercise a great and beneficent influence in behalf of the cause, and we can not but regret that she so seldom offers her thoughts to the press.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE N. Y. TRIBUNE:

Sir—in a recent conversation with you on the spiritual phenomena, you acknowledged that, apart from the spiritual theory, we have as yet no adequate solution of the mystery. You have seen objects moved without visible contact, and seem ready to admit the evidence of some unknown intelligence.

A writer in the December number of *Putnam's Magazine*, in a notice of Judge Edmonds' work, takes substantially the same ground; earnestly commanding the whole matter to a careful scientific analysis. Faraday's account of the "table turning" he regards as simply ludicrous in its superficiality.

"What are we to believe?" is the opening sentence of an elaborate article in the October number of the *London Quarterly*, in which the author says: "How we will, we hear of intimations which our friends have received from departed souls, or of the agility of some sprightly table under the hands of dignitaries of the Church, Privy-Councilors, and Cabinet Ministers, to say nothing of the miscellaneous multitudes before whom this farce is nightly enacted." What, then, are we to believe? The author gravely assures us that "nothing can be simpler than the exposition of the mystery." When the brain acts without the concurrence of the will, it acts anatomically—as a machine. When the attention is for a long time concentrated on one object, the mind becomes vacant—"dormant"—"automatic;" accessible to any suggestion however preposterous, from without, or to any dominant idea which may chance to get possession from within. These suggestions or ideas it obeys as unconsciously as a locomotive obeys its conductor. A hat is placed on the table, and the fingers of the reverend and honorable investigators are placed upon the hat. Presently (in consequence of the intense concentration of attention usual on these occasions), the minds of all these reverend and honorable gentlemen become "vacant"—"dormant"—"automatic." A dominant idea takes possession of them; at one and the same moment they begin to push the hat; the hat pushes the table; the table revolves with increasing celerity (always in the direction of the sun), and behold all these reverend and honorable investigators in the full tide of successful experiment! Here is a very simple and comprehensive theory. There is no need of resorting to odyle, electricity, biology, mesmerism, or unconscious rapport; no further need of Prof. Faraday's complex machinery. We have only to suppose a set of human androids revolving under the influence of a dominant idea. Given the hat, the table, the vacant brains and the dominant idea, and you have a complete solution of the problem. The revolving tables are the inevitable result.

This is "what we are to believe" on the authority of the *London Quarterly*, although the writer assures us, with infinite naïveté, that in investigating the phenomena, he has found it necessary to treat with complete disregard the testimony of all who have given themselves up to the table-turning idea, and concludes by cautioning the public against its quick contagion. It is not with such solutions or such advice that the minds of intelligent and competent witnesses are to be satisfied on this most curious and momentous question. Yet the theory of the London reviewer in relation to the influence of "suggestion" is so well stated, and accounts so satisfactorily for certain mental phenomena exhibited during the extreme concentration of mind, that it is often cited of late by persons ignorant of the actual condition under which the table movements occur, as an intelligible solution of the whole matter. The statement of a few facts may serve to show how inexplicable this ingenious theory is to many phases of the phenomena it professes to explain.

While engaged in tabular experiments with a friend, who has recently discovered that he has power of moving tables, without conscious effort, and who has believed that the movements are induced by some involuntary action of the muscles, I proposed that we should test this theory by requesting a third person, who had just entered the room (who had no known power of eliciting or aiding the manifestations, and who had not once approached the table at which my friend was standing), to mentally induce a series of movements to be accomplished by it. His directions (involving often the most complex and eccentric evolutions) were fulfilled to the letter. One case occurred of peculiar interest: The table was required, through a concealed written direction, to make a circuit around a large arm-chair standing in a remote part of the room. An obstacle, INVISIBLE TO THE PERSON WHO HAD GIVEN THIS DIRECTION, prevented it from taking the precise course indicated. The obstacle was most ingeniously avoided, and the object accomplished by another and more circuitous route. It is needless to say that my friend relinquished his theory of involuntary muscular pressure.

From a correspondent in New York—a writer of acknowledged ability and high intellectual endowments—I have received the following curious particulars, which can not readily find their solution in the very simple exposition of the *Quarterly*:

While on a visit to Palmyra just after Prof. Faraday's letter had appeared, I proposed to two or three of the family, who had seen nothing of the phenomena, to sit with me around a table, and ascertain, if possible, how much of the motion was due to involuntary pressure. In about an hour the table commenced whirling rapidly. I directed all to remove their hands, and raised mine some inches. It continued its rotary motion long enough to make several circuits, and when it stopped, loud raps were heard as if on the under side—a dozen or twenty, perhaps, at intervals. Again we placed our hands on it till it began to revolve, and again removed them without interrupting the motion or the sounds. The next evening the experiments were made in the presence of fifteen persons with the same results. When I asked the reason for this brilliant success, which could not be obtained elsewhere, it was replied (through the customary telegraphic signals) that the circle was harmonious.

At Soda Point, some weeks afterward, a very light table followed my hands over the carpet without contact; the table not having been previously touched at all. Since then, by holding my hands above a small table in the midst of a circle, it was lifted from the floor. This, too, was accomplished without contact. I can by no means obtain these results at will.

I have been compelled to recognize the existence of a wonderful occult power in nature, which ought to be investigated, and have earnestly sought to induce scientific persons of high reputation to give their attention to the subject. I wrote to Prof. Hare, as he had written a letter on the subject, giving him the names of witnesses, but he has done nothing. Prof. Renwick has seen and is convinced that material objects may be

moved without visible contact, but has recognized no evidence of intelligence. My belief that the phenomena are often controlled by intelligence comes gradually.

It appears that the minds of persons who do not touch the tables sometimes affect the success of the experiment.

Mental questions have been correctly answered in my presence, and communications given in Latin, French, German, Spanish, and Italian. Names of deceased persons unknown to me are often communicated to their surviving friends and relatives, and long-forgotten incidents brought to mind. A scientific gentleman lately presented me, as a test, a word written and inclosed in a carefully sealed envelop. When the answer (given through a well-known medium in the presence of an eminent physician of this city) was sent to him with the UNOPENED ENVELOP, he refused either to confirm or deny its accuracy.

What, then, are we to believe? Where are we to look for the solution of these mysteries which science persists in ignoring, and at which religion shudders?

Can true science regard as trivial or unimportant these evidences of an occult force or an unknown intelligence? Can true faith ascribe them to the malignity of the demon? I know not. The Rev. Dr. Beecher, of Boston, does so. The clergy of France and England are doing so. Pio Nono himself (according to the Countess Sophie Kisseloff) tells us "it is the demon who takes all these forms. It is the sin of pride—the desire of forbidden knowledge."

For myself, I can not accept such a view. I believe, "if we would penetrate that sacred night that environ's truth, we must allow the devil no power in nature; we must look for natural causes in all extraordinary events, and, when such causes are wanting, recur to God."

If there is a spiritual world conjoined with the natural—if there are invisible beings forever associated with us in that mysterious inner life whose threshold we pass not without holy awe—I would know of that world and its inhabitants what God permits. If Spirits have acquired new power to commune with us, through the operations of Nature's all-wise and beautiful laws, the selfish and cowardly policy which would make us fancy contagion in such a communion seems to me unworthy of a generous and sincere nature. We must trust to the inherent affinities of the soul and to its acquired discretion, to keep each within the sphere of its true order. The wise Magians believed that to be false, the cowardly and the presumptuous, the genii of the air, were sometimes perfidious and dangerous. It may be that the conditions of spiritual intercourse are not changed. Courage, candor, and good faith are still requisite to a successful investigation.

The "Phantom of the Threshold"—the reptile fear—the creeping terror of Bulwer's first romance, still guards the approach to all new realms of thought, still lies in wait for all who step beyond the prescriptive paths of knowledge. But over the faithful and sincere its power is limited.

If the air is rife with demons, I would know it. If, as others tell us, the magic mirror of which we have gained possession but reflects the mortal aspect of him who looks within its shadowy depths, I would learn such lessons as may be conveyed in its exhibitions of frivolity, insanity, or demonic fear. But if, at this strange era of the world, the spiritual energies inherent in the race are being aroused after a long slumber into a renewed and hitherto unprecedented energy to welcome the great cloud of witnesses that announce a better day for humanity, I would wait patiently, while the mists of the valley are dispersing, for the full radiance of that glorious light.

Respectfully, your friend,

SARAH HELEN WHITMAN.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Jan. 30, 1854.

## ILLUSIONS OF THE BRAIN.

Dr. Gooch relates the case of a lady who, in consequence of an alarm of fire, believed that she was the Virgin Mary, and that her head was constantly encircled by a brilliant halo. Dr. Uwins gives an account of an intellectual young gentleman who, from some morbid association with the idea of an elephant, was struck by a horrific spasm whenever the word was named, or even written before him; and to such a pitch was this infatuation carried, that the elephant paper, if he were sensible it were such, produced the same effect. A similar case is told of a gentleman, who, on narrowly escaping from the earthquake at Lisbon, fell into a state of delirium whenever the word *earthquake* was pronounced in his hearing. The Rev. John Mason, of Water Stratford, evinced in every thing sound judgment, except that he believed he was Elias, and foretold the advent of Christ, who was to commence the millennium at Stratford. A lady, twenty-three years of age, afflicted with hysterical madness, used to remain constantly at the windows of her apartment during the summer. When she saw a beautiful cloud in the sky, she screamed out, "Garverin, Garverin, come and take me!" and repeated the same invitation until the cloud disappeared. She mistook the clouds for balloons sent up by Garverin. The Rev. Simon Brown died with the conviction that his *rotundal soul* was annihilated by a special fiat of the Divine will; and a patient in the Friends' "Retreat," at York, thought he had no soul, heart, or lungs. There was a tradesman who thought he was a seven-shilling piece, and advertised himself thus: "If my wife presents me for payment, don't change me."

Bishop Warburton tells us of a man who thought himself a "goose pie;" and Dr. Ferriday, of Manchester, had a patient who thought he had "swallowed the devil." In Paris there lived a man who thought he had, with others, been guillotined, and when Napoleon was emperor their heads were all restored, but in the scramble he got the wrong one! Marcus Donatus tells us of one Vicentius, who believed himself too large to pass out of his doorways. To dispel this illusion, it was resolved by his physician that he should be dragged through the aperture by force. This erroneous dictate was obeyed; but as he was forced along, Vicentius screamed out in agony that his limbs were fractured, and the flesh torn from his bones. His dreadful delusion, with terrific imprecations against his murderers, he died.

CHLOROFORM.—The first experiment upon the local application of chloroform has been made with entire success at the Clinic Hospital, Paris. Mr. Paul Dubois induced a young girl, an attendant at the hospital, to allow her wrist, upon which was a very virulent abscess, to be fumigated with the vapor of chloroform. The abscess immediately became insensible and remained so for three hours. The patient, who before could not move her arm, nor allow the least contact with the sore, recovered the entire use of her hand. On a second trial, when the abscess had come to a head, Mr. Dubois plunged his instrument into it, and the patient felt no pain whatever. The wound is now healing, and a certain degree of insensibility consequent upon the fumigation, still exists in the part.

MEDICAL PROPHECY.—Thomas Devin Reilly, one of the editors of the *Irishman*, and *The Felon*, Irish papers that figured in 1845, and subsequently a writer for the *Democratic Review*, of this city, died at Washington on Monday, the 5th inst., of apoplexy. We see it stated that Mr. Reilly had an attack of apoplexy when at the age of fifteen, and was relieved by a celebrated surgeon of Dublin, who said he would have another at the age of thirty, which would either destroy his life or shatter his constitution. This prediction had been recollected, and made such an impression upon him that for the last ten days, as the age of thirty approached, he had repeated it to his wife.

DAGUERREOTYPING MICROSCOPIC OBJECTS.—A Mr. Starr, of this city, after experimenting for years with the microscope, has at length succeeded in obtaining daguerreotypes of microscopic objects. He has secured perfect images of animalcules magnified several thousand times. The first taken was of a *flea*, which on paper is about four inches in length, and the image as perfect as when thrown upon canvas by a microscope. The next was of twenty-seven *animalcules* taken from a bee, which measure on paper about two inches in length. *Transverse sections* of wood have been taken in a similar manner exhibiting the pores of rattan about a quarter of an inch in diameter. The process is almost instantaneous; the powerful light of the microscope fixing the image at once.

JUDGE EDMONDS, the great teacher of spiritual philosophy—the man who dares utter his convictions of truth and of right, regardless of the opprobrium of sectarianism or the aggressions of political mountebanks, is now lecturing in the Western States upon the subject of Spiritualism. We hope the Judge will visit this place before his return East, for we believe that many who have, without investigation, passed a verdict of "humble and delusion" upon the subject, would see their error if informed what the real doctrines of Spiritualism are.—*Mineral Point Tribune*.

NEW LOCOMOTORS.—An Avignon (France) paper chronicles the arrival there of a vehicle driven by compressed air, which had come from Marseilles, a distance of 60 miles, in four hours. The carriage was divided like a house, into various compartments for different uses, and conveyed, upon this its first trip, one hundred persons. French high roads permit easily a speed of 12 miles an hour.

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8. The Classification of Media,  
9. The Classification of Causes,  
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